
Part III—Next Steps and Conclusion

Next Steps

We are pleased to be a part of the process of helping California improve its adult offender rehabilitation programming and have presented our roadmap of recommendations to guide the CDCR down the path of using evidence-based principles and practices with its prison and parole offender populations.

We believe that this report is just the first step of the journey. In this chapter we present recommendations for future projects and-or activities that the CDCR should engage in to continue to make progress in this important undertaking.

Complete CPAP Assessments. This Panel was able to complete CPAP assessments for 11 out of the 34 identified CDCR Recidivism Reduction Programs. We propose that the CDCR complete assessments for the remaining 23 programs and issues a report of its findings to the Legislature.

Focus on Academic Programming. In a future phase of this project, we believe the Panel should spend more time evaluating and commenting on the CDCR's academic program offerings. Because of our time limitations, we did not feel that we were able to give the academic programs the amount of attention that they warranted. Therefore, we propose that future Panel activities focus on academic programs.

Develop Benchmarks that Assist with the Implementation of AB 900. We recognize that many of the activities that the CDCR is now mandated to perform as a result of the passage of AB 900 are activities that other agencies in other states have successfully completed. We propose that a future Panel partners with the CDCR to help it implement these requirements. The future Panel could use its experiences and expertise to help the CDCR implement these requirements with fewer mistakes and greater efficiency.

Help CDCR Establish "High-Powered" Implementation Teams. As we have stated, we believe that the CDCR's progress has been hindered by the existence of "silos" within its organizational structure. As part of the future implementation phase of this project, we would like to work with the CDCR to help it establish targeted implementation teams comprised of leaders from diagonal slices of the CDCR department that cuts across existing silos. These teams would be empowered by the Secretary of CDCR and granted broad authority to implement the changes called for in our recommendations. The Panel's role would be to help create these teams and then to advise them as needed.

Analyze Support Infrastructure. We propose that a future Panel consult with the CDCR leadership team to analyze its support infrastructure in light of its current mission and objectives. The Panel would then help the CDCR create a support infrastructure that reflects organizational best practices and is better suited to implement our recommendations.

Help CDCR Develop Capacity to Perform QA and Evaluation on a Continuing Basis. Several of our recommendations are built on the concept of “continuous improvement.” A necessary component of continuous improvement is measuring quality. We propose that future Panel activities include teaming with the CDCR’s Office of Research to help its staff members develop the internal skills and tools they will need to perform quality assurance measurements and to perform process and outcome evaluations on all of the CDCR adult offender programs.

Assist with Outcome Evaluation of Spending of \$54 Million Reentry Initiatives Budget. We propose that a future Panel work with the CDCR to evaluate the outcomes of the spending decisions made in accordance with the \$50 million reentry initiatives budget. If new programs were implemented as a result of this spending, the Panel could assist with the evaluations of those programs. At the conclusion of the evaluation period, the Panel should issue a report to the Legislature describing its findings.

Refine Population Projections and Financial Estimates. We propose that a future Panel work with the CDCR to obtain the information and develop the appropriate models to refine information concerning the impacts of our recommendations on future CDCR populations and budgets.

Assist with the Development of RFPs for Future Research Studies. We believe that at some point in the future, the CDCR will need to conduct, multi-year research studies to determine the effectiveness of its key adult offender rehabilitation programs. We propose that a future Panel assist the CDCR with developing requests for proposal (RFPs) for qualified research entities to conduct these studies. The Panel could also serve as an independent entity to help the CDCR interview and select the appropriate research entities.

Provide Additional Recommendations for Prisoners with Long Lengths of Stay. California has a large number of prisoners who have been or will be incarcerated for long periods of time. We think that a future Panel should study this population and then provide the CDCR with rehabilitation and reentry programming recommendations that would address the specific needs of this often neglected group of adult offenders.

Provide Additional Recommendations for Parolees Reentering their Communities. Most of our attention for this report was focused on the CDCR’s prison system. We feel that a future Panel should look at the CDCR’s parole system and provide the CDCR with additional recommendations on how to improve the quality of rehabilitation programming delivered in the community, as well as to suggest ways for improving the manner in which programs are delivered in the community.

Produce a Detailed Implementation Plan that Operationalizes Our Recommendations. We provide a high-level implementation plan in this report. We propose that a future Panel work with the CDCR to develop a detailed implementation plan. The Panel can help the CDCR integrate the plan into its existing strategic plan and review annually the progress that the CDCR is making toward accomplishing plan objectives.

Conclusion

We believe that with this *Report to the California State Legislature: A Roadmap for Effective Offender Programming in California*, we have provided guidance to California for improving its adult prisoner and parolee rehabilitation programming and reducing its recidivism rate. The public deserves and the offenders need the opportunity to receive the rehabilitation programming and services necessary to help them make a successful and long-term transition to the community.

In this report we advocate a system of identifying needed rehabilitative programming, implementing those programs, and measuring the fidelity of their implementation and outcomes in relation to their effectiveness. We believe that California will realize two important benefits from a public policy perspective: (a) the CDCR will be more transparent and accountable for a mission that is in line with the public's expectations, and (b) a significantly larger number of the several hundreds of thousands of prisoners who enter California prisons will return to their communities more prepared to be law abiding citizens.



